

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Withdrawn) A method of feeding an animal comprising feeding the animal a *Lactobacillus* strain that has a Profile I based on *Apa* I, *Not* I and *Xba* I digests, as shown in Figure 1 and Table 6.
2. (Withdrawn) A method of claim 1, wherein the feeding of the *Lactobacillus* strain decreases levels of at least one of coliforms and *E. coli* within the gastrointestinal tract of an animal.
3. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the strain fed comprises at least one of a *L. brevis* strain, a *L. fermentum* strain, and a *L. murinus* strain.
4. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the strain fed comprises *L. brevis* strain 1E-1.
5. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the *Lactobacillus* strain is isolated from a pig.
6. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the *Lactobacillus* strain is isolated from a pars oesophagea of a pig.
7. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the animal fed is a pig.
8. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 7, wherein the *Lactobacillus* strain is fed to the pig prior to weaning.
9. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 7, wherein the *Lactobacillus* strain is fed to the pig during weaning.
10. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 7, wherein the *Lactobacillus* strain is fed to the pig after weaning.
11. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the animal is fed the *Lactobacillus* strain such that the amount of *Lactobacillus* strain delivered to the animal is about 1×10^8 CFU

to about 1×10^{10} CFU per day.

12. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 11, wherein the animal is fed the *Lactobacillus* strain such that the amount of *Lactobacillus* strain delivered to the animal is about 5×10^9 CFU per day.

13. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the feeding of the *Lactobacillus* strain increases performance of the animal.

14. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13, wherein the increase in performance comprises an increase in average daily gain.

15. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the feeding of the *Lactobacillus* strain improves intestinal morphology.

16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, wherein the improvement in intestinal morphology comprises an increase in the villus:crypt ratio in the animal.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, wherein improvement in intestinal morphology comprises a decrease in the number of sulfuric goblet cells.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the feeding of the *Lactobacillus* strain increases a gain:feed ratio in the animal fed the *Lactobacillus* strain.

19. (Currently Amended) A direct-fed microbial comprising:
(a) at least one biologically pure bacterial culture of a *Lactobacillus* strain that has a ~~the~~ Profile I based on *Apa* I, *Not* I and *Xba* I digests, as shown in Figure 1A, Figure 1B, and Table 6; and
(b) a carrier.

20. (Previously Presented) The direct-fed microbial of claim 19, wherein the *Lactobacillus* strain decreases levels of coliforms within the gastrointestinal tract of an animal.

21. (Previously Presented) The direct-fed microbial of claim 19, wherein the strain is at least one of a *L. brevis* strain, a *L. fermentum* strain, and a *L. murinus* strain.

22. (Previously Presented) The direct-fed microbial of claim 19, wherein the strain is *L. brevis* strain 1E-1 ATCC Accession No. PTA-6509.

23. (Original) The direct-fed microbial of claim 19, wherein the *Lactobacillus* strain is isolated from a pig.

24. (Previously Presented) The direct-fed microbial of claim 19, wherein the *Lactobacillus* strain is isolated from the pars oesophagea of a pig.

25. (Original) The direct-fed microbial of claim 19, wherein the carrier comprises a liquid carrier.

26. (Original) The direct-fed microbial of claim 25, wherein the liquid carrier comprises a milk replacer.

27. (Original) The direct-fed microbial of claim 25, wherein the liquid carrier comprises water.

28. (Original) The direct-fed microbial of claim 19, wherein the direct-fed microbial is in the form of gel paste or a drench.

29. (Original) The direct-fed microbial of claim 19, wherein the carrier comprises a gruel feed.

30. (Currently Amended) An isolated *Lactobacillus* strain that has ~~[[a]]~~the Profile I based on *Apa* I, *Not* I and *Xba* I digests, as shown in Figure 1A, Figure 1B, and Table 6.

31. (Previously Presented) The *Lactobacillus* strain of claim 30, wherein the strain is at least one of a *L. brevis* strain, a *L. fermentum* strain, and a *L. murinus* strain.

32. (Previously Presented) The *Lactobacillus* strain of claim 30, wherein the strain decreases levels of coliforms within the gastrointestinal tract of an animal.

33. (Previously Presented) The *Lactobacillus* strain of claim 30, wherein the strain is *L. brevis* strain 1E-1 ATCC Accession No. PTA-6509.

34. (Original) The *Lactobacillus* strain of claim 30, wherein the strain is isolated from a pig.

35. (Previously Presented) The *Lactobacillus* strain of claim 30, wherein the strain is isolated from the pars oesophagea of a pig.

36. (Withdrawn) A method of forming a direct fed microbial, the method comprising:

(a) growing, in a liquid nutrient broth, a culture including at least one *Lactobacillus* strain has a Profile I based on *Apa* I, *Not* I and *Xba* I digests, as shown in Figure 1 and Table 6; and

(b) separating the strain from the liquid nutrient broth.

37. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 36, wherein the *Lactobacillus* strain comprises *L. brevis* strain 1E-1.

38. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 36, further comprising freeze-drying the strain to form the direct-fed microbial.

39. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 38, further comprising adding the freeze-dried strain to a carrier.

Claims 40-41 (Canceled)

42. (Currently Amended) ~~The isolated *Lactobacillus* strain of claim 40~~ An isolated *Lactobacillus* strain that is *L. brevis* strain 1E-1 ATCC Accession No. PTA-6509 or a *Lactobacillus* strain having substantially the same genomic DNA profile based on *Apa* I, *Not* I and *Xba* I digests as strain 1E-1, wherein the *Lactobacillus* strain decreases levels of coliforms within the gastrointestinal tract of an animal.

43. (Previously Presented) An isolated *Lactobacillus brevis* strain 1E-1 ATCC Accession No. PTA-6509.

44. (Previously Presented) An isolated *Lactobacillus brevis* strain having the identifying characteristics of the *Lactobacillus brevis* strain of claim 43.